

§ 143B-434.2. Travel and Tourism Policy Act.

- (a) This section shall be known as the Travel and Tourism Policy Act.
- (b) The General Assembly of North Carolina finds that:
 - (1) The State of North Carolina is endowed with great scenic beauty, historical sites, and cultural resources, and with a population whose ethnic diversity and traditions are attractive to visitors.
 - (2) These resources should be preserved and nurtured, not only because they are appreciated by other Americans and by visitors from other lands, but because they are valued by the State's own residents.
 - (3) Tourism provides economic well-being by contributing to employment and economic development, generating State revenues and receipts for local businesses, and increasing international trade.
 - (4) Tourism is an educational and informational medium for personal growth which informs residents about their State's geography and history, their political institutions, their cultural resources, and their environment, and about each other.
 - (5) Tourism instills State pride and a sense of common interest among the people of the State.
 - (6) Tourism enhances the quality of life and well-being of the State's residents by affording recreation, new experiences, and opportunities for relief from job stress.
 - (7) Tourism promotes international understanding and goodwill, and contributes to intercultural appreciation.
 - (8) Tourism engenders appreciation of the State's cultural, architectural, technological, and industrial achievements.
 - (9) The development and promotion of tourism to and within the State is in the interest of the people of North Carolina.
 - (10) Tourism should develop in an orderly manner in order to provide the maximum benefit to the State and its residents.
 - (11) A comprehensive tourism policy is essential if tourism is to grow in an orderly way.
- (c) The policy of the State of North Carolina is to:
 - (1) Encourage the orderly growth and development of travel and tourism to and within the State.
 - (2) Promote the State's travel and tourism resources to the residents of the State, and to potential visitors from other states and other countries.
 - (3) Instill a sense of history in the State's young people by encouraging family visits to State historic sites, and by promoting the preservation and restoration of historic sites, trails, buildings, and districts.
 - (4) Promote the mental, emotional, and physical well-being of the people of North Carolina by encouraging outdoor recreational activities within the State.
 - (5) Strengthen a sense of common interest among the residents of the State by encouraging them to visit each other's communities and discover each other's traditions and ways of life.
 - (6) Increase national and international awareness of the State's cultural contributions by encouraging attendance at orchestral, operatic, dramatic, and other productions by artistic groups performing in the State.
 - (7) Cultivate the State's commercial interests by encouraging local and county fairs so that visitors may learn about local products and crafts.

- (8) Encourage the talents and strengthen the economic independence of State residents by encouraging the preservation of traditional craft skills; the production of handicrafts and folk art by private artisans and craftspeople; and the holding of craft demonstrations.
- (9) Provide visitors to the State with a hospitable reception.
- (10) Develop and maintain a statewide tourism data base.
- (11) Encourage the protection of wildlife and natural resources and the preservation of geological, archaeological, and cultural treasures in tourist areas.
- (12) Encourage, assist, and coordinate, where possible, the tourism activities of local and area promotional organizations.
- (13) Ensure that the tourism interest of the State is fully considered by State agencies and the General Assembly in their deliberations; and coordinate, to the maximum extent possible, all State activities in support of tourism with the needs of the general public, the political subdivisions of the State, and the tourism industry.

(d) The Department of Commerce, and the nonprofit corporation with which the Department contracts pursuant to G.S. 143B-431.01(b) to promote and market tourism, shall implement the policies set forth in this section. The nonprofit corporation shall make an annual report to the the chairs of the Senate Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Natural, and Economic Resources, the chairs of the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources, and the Joint Legislative Economic Development and Global Engagement Oversight Committee regarding the status of the travel and tourism industry in North Carolina; the report shall be submitted to the chairs of the Senate Appropriations Committee on Agriculture, Natural, and Economic Resources, the chairs of the House of Representatives Appropriations Committee on Agriculture and Natural and Economic Resources, and the Joint Legislative Economic Development and Global Engagement Oversight Committee by October 15 of each year beginning October 15, 2015. The duties and responsibilities of the nonprofit corporation shall be to:

- (1) Organize and coordinate programs designed to promote tourism within the State and to the State from other states and foreign countries.
- (2) Measure and forecast tourist volume, receipts, and impact, both social and economic.
- (3) Develop a comprehensive plan to promote tourism to the State.
- (4) Encourage the development of the State's tourism infrastructure, facilities, services, and attractions.
- (5) Cooperate with neighboring states and the federal government to promote tourism to the State from other countries.
- (6) Develop opportunities for professional education and training in the tourism industry.
- (7) Provide advice and technical assistance to local public and private tourism organizations in promoting tourism to the State.
- (8) Encourage cooperation between State agencies and private individuals and organizations to advance the State's tourist interests and seek the views of these agencies and the private sector in the development of State tourism programs and policies.
- (9) Give leadership to all concerned with tourism in the State.
- (10) Perform other functions necessary to the orderly growth and development of tourism.

- (11) Develop informational materials for visitors which, among other things, shall:
 - a. Describe the State's travel and tourism resources and the State's history, economy, political institutions, cultural resources, outdoor recreational facilities, and principal festivals.
 - b. Urge visitors to protect endangered species, natural resources, archaeological artifacts, and cultural treasures.
 - c. Instill the ethic of stewardship of the State's natural resources.
- (12) Foster an understanding among State residents and civil servants of the economic importance of hospitality and tourism to the State.
- (13) Work with local businesses, including banks and hotels, with educational institutions, and with the United States Travel and Tourism Administration, to provide special services for international visitors, such as currency exchange facilities.
- (14) Encourage the reduction of architectural and other barriers which impede travel by physically handicapped persons. (1991, c. 144, ss. 1-4; 1991 (Reg. Sess., 1992), c. 959, s. 85; 2000-140, s. 79(b); 2011-145, s. 14.3; 2015-241, s. 15.4(c); 2017-57, s. 14.1(q).)